

It is a practice that is mindful of the brain and the heart, the earthly and the astral, the minute and the monumental.

As with the practice of species-specific medicine, the practice of planetary medicine requires careful diagnoses based on an accurate assessment of signs and symptoms and pertinent laboratory studies. Treatment ranges from dietary adjustments and behavior modifications to extensive surgical procedures. Organ transplants save lives just as recycling preserves precious and finite resources. While each of us must recognize the web of life in our own way, our practices must reflect a planetary view, acknowledging that our health is intimately linked to the survival of the planet. Our needs must be seen in the context of the needs of the planet, not just

for today but for the future. We must accept our humble position in the global hierarchy. Resisting the temptation to be overwhelmed by the enormity of global problems, we must demonstrate an individual resolve to the "rightness" of each of our actions.

"Whatever befalls the Earth befalls the sons of the Earth" (Chief Seattle, *Solstice*, 1989; [34]: 72). We are tenants, not landlords, of this earth, and we must all practice planetary medicine in the living of our lives.

#### REFERENCE

1. Lovelock J: *The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Earth*. New York, NY, WW Norton, 1988

## OLDER BROTHER

August afternoons when the sky darkened with storms  
we'd climb the old silver maple  
high as its limbs could hold us  
and ride that wind that rocked the wren house  
and turned grape leaves to their white undersides

down on the arbor. He'd lean into it  
like a prow, his hair cowlicked back  
seeming to stare at something beyond  
our hills of sheep and junk yards, unflinching  
even when rain spattered his glasses.

That's how I think he looks now,  
walking on silent shoes through the wards  
delivering news to families too stunned to question  
the voice that pronounces so surely  
still birth or the names of cancers.

But I wonder if there is ever a father,  
a mill worker with large, blackened fists  
who grabs the narrow lapels of his lab coat  
and pounds on my brother's chest,  
demanding that he take it back.

JULIA KASDORF©  
Brooklyn, New York